

220 COMMENTARY ON MACAULAY'S
HISTORY

Captain Browning's ship stopped at the
bomb wharf where he
was killed [and] the boat swayed and the boat
swayed mate
of the *Swallow* who commanded her long
boat cutt the
bomb soe that the weight of the ship broke it
and the ships
went up but with soe little wind that the long
boat towed
the *Mountjoye* all the way to the towne.¹

In one of William's conversations with the
Marquis of
Halifax, dated August 18, 1689, the King said '
he would
remember Shelly, who cut the chain at
Londonderry/²
Who Shelly was and what reward he obtained
remain un-
known, but this is evidence that the King and
his minister
believed the boom was cut. The only pension
granted for
breaking the boom was ^60 a year to the
widow of Micaiah
Browning.

How did the story that the boom was broken
by a ship's
weight get into circulation? One reason
certainly is that
it was related in Parliament, as the following
extract from
Sir Robert Rich's speech proves.

What is said, gives me occasion to tell you
something of
my own knowledge. A captain who lived
twenty or thirty
miles from Londonderry, and who loved the
place, had
applied to the Council of Scotland for the relief
of it: they
loaded him with meal; he sailed by our fleet,
and was
brought aboard to give an account why he did
go by the
fleet without calling, and he must give an
account to the
general; he said, * he knew no general/ They
caused him
to lie there five weeks; he asked them the

reason : they
 told him, * There was a prodigious boom cross
 the river,
 choaked up with sunk vessels, and a battery
 on the river,
 with small shot, on each side/ He asked,
 Whether, in five
 weeks, any long-boat was sent to view the
 boom ?¹—The
 boy he sent, who swam in, gave a dismal
 account of the
 condition of the town. He was ordered to go
 up the river,

¹ Hist. MSS. Comm., Le Fleming MSS. f p. 255.

² Foxcroft, Halifax, ii. 231.